

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 KINGST 05140 242116Z

15

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01

USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 NSC-05 /033 W

----- 115061

R 242038Z NOV 76

FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3208

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY NASSAU

AMEMBASSY PORT

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 5140

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, JM

SUBJECT: ELECTORAL CONSTITUENCIES FIXED, PARLIAMENT DISSOLVES

1. THE JAMAICAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES YESTERDAY (NOVEMBER 23) APPROVED AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES FROM 53 TO 60, AS LONG ANTICIPATED. UNDER THE RESTRUCTURING, THREE NEW SEATS WERE ADDED TO ST. ANDREW PARISH (UP FROM EIGHT TO ELEVEN), TWO TO ST. CATHERINE (UP FROM FIVE TO SEVEN), AND ONE EACH TO ST. JAMES (UP FROM THREE TO FOUR), CLARENDON (UP FROM FIVE TO SIX) AND KINGSTON (UP FROM THREE TO FOUR); IN THE PROCESS, THE THREE CONSTITUENCIES IN ST. THOMAS WERE COMBINED INTO TWO. IN ADDITION, THERE WERE MINOR CHANGES IN THE BOUNDARIES OF CONSTITUENCIES IN PORTLAND, ST. ANN AND WESTMORELAND PARISHES.

2. THE OPPOSITION JAMAICA LABOUR PARTY (JLP) ATTACKED THE REDISTRICTING VIGOROUSLY. HOWEVER, GIVEN ITS MINORITY POSITION, THE REMARKS OF ITS MEMBERS WERE AIMED MORE AT INFLUENCING THE PUBLIC THAN AT ALTERING THE OUTCOME OF THE DEBATE. JLP CHAIRMAN BRUCE GOLDING CHARGED THAT THE RESULT WAS

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 KINGST 05140 242116Z

PRE-DETERMINED (AS INDEED IT WAS, THUS ALLOWING THE

JLP TO GET ON WITH ITS CAMPAIGNING EARLIER THAN WOULD HAVE BEEN THE CASE HAD THE OUTCOME BEEN IN DOUBT) AND AMOUNTED TO "BLATANT AND NAKED GERRY-MANDERING". IN RESPONSE, INDUSTRY, TOURISM AND FOREIGN TRADE MINISTER P.J. PATTERSON REMINDED THE HOUSE THAT UNDER THE BOUNDARIES LAST ESTABLISHED -- WHILE THE JLP WAS IN POWER -- THE JLP COULD WIN A MAJORITY OF THE SEATS IN THE HOUSE WITH 48 PERCENT OF THE VOTE WHILE THE RULING PEOPLES NATIONAL PARTY (PNP) WOULD NEED 53 PERCENT; AGAIN, THE AUDIENCE WAS AS MUCH OUTSIDE THE HOUSE AS IT WAS IN.

3. THE APPROVAL OF THE REPORT OF THE CONSTITUENCIES BOUNDARY COMMITTEE WAS THE LAST PIECE OF SUBSTANTIAL WORK DONE BY THE HOUSE BEFORE IT ADJOURNED, TAKING THE 1972-76 PARLIAMENT OUT OF EXISTENCE. THE SCENE IN THE HOUSE WAS MARKED BY A KIND OF "SCHOOL'S OUT" ATTITUDE. WHEN THE LEADER OF THE HOUSE, NATIONAL SECURITY MINISTER KEBLE MUNN MOVED THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE SINE DIE, HE SAID "THE TRUMPET HAS SOUNDED". IN RESPONSE, MEMBERS OF THE RULING PARTY BROKE OUT HORNS WHICH THEY BEGAN TO SOUND TO THE ACCOMPANIMENT OF WHIRLING RATTLES.

4. WHILE KEBLE MUNN'S REFERENCE TO THE LAST JUDGMENT MAY HAVE BEEN UNINTENDED, THE SCENE IN THE STREETS OUTSIDE THE HOUSE CHAMBER MIGHT HAVE GIVEN PAUSE TO THOSE CONSIDERING JAMAICA'S FUTURE. SUPPORTERS OF BOTH THE PNP AND THE JLP WERE OUT IN NUMBERS TO CHEER THEIR RESPECTIVE PARLIAMENTARIANS. INEVITABLY, FIGHTING BROKE OUT. BEFORE ORDER COULD BE RESTORED, THE POLICE WERE ATTACKED BY THE PNP FOLLOWERS AND HAD TO USE TEAR GAS. THERE WERE HIGH SPIRITS (AS WELL AS THOSE HIGH ON SPIRITS) BUT THE MORE DRAMATIC ELEMENT WAS THE HEIGHT OF POLITICAL PASSIONS.
DORRANCE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT REFORM, DATA, FORM OF GOVERNMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 NOV 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976KINGST05140
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760438-1092
From: KINGSTON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761119/aaaaapqf.tel
Line Count: 98
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13 JUL 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <25 OCT 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ELECTORAL CONSTITUENCIES FIXED, PARLIAMENT DISSOLVES
TAGS: PINT, JM
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006